

INFANTRY LETTERS



SNIPER WEAPON

I may be nitpicking here, but the statement that the M24 sniper weapon system "is to be employed as a force multiplier in low- and high-intensity conflicts where U.S. forces are outnumbered on the battlefield" (INFANTRY News, March-April 1989, page 5) came as somewhat of a jolt.

Specifically, since when do U.S. forces have to be outnumbered in combat to properly, and successfully, employ snipers? Snipers are trained to deliver long-range precision fire on selected targets from concealed positions in support of combat operations; in their alternate capacity as intelligence gatherers, they can be the eyes and ears of the commander.

Regardless of intensity of conflict or numerical superiority, snipers—if employed properly—will perform those tasks. And regardless of the tactical situation, aggressive battlefield leaders will also employ their snipers for the tremendous psychological damage they can inflict upon the enemy—good value in any war.

JOHN W. COLEMAN
Boulder, Colorado

AERIAL PHOTOGRAPHY

As an Intelligence officer trained in aerial photography, I would like to comment on Sergeant First Class John E. Foley's generally good article "Aerial Photographs" in the March-April 1989 issue of INFANTRY (pages 38-39).

While he makes some excellent points about the advantages of "do-it-yourself" aerial photography to a tactical unit, I don't think he goes far enough in discussing the realities of trying to use it in combat.

The first major consideration is the fact that it must be done from a helicopter.

Helicopters, in most units, are not available on call, and arrangements have to be made in advance. Also, in a hostile environment, aerial photography would be a highly dangerous mission, even for a high-performance aircraft. A helicopter, flying low and slow to take pictures, would be a sitting duck. This would mean that any attempt at photographing an enemy-held objective from the air would have to be made with extreme caution.

A high oblique shot might be taken at a comparatively safe distance, but such a shot would offer little that could not also be seen from a high hill, if one was available. A vertical shot of an enemy-held position would be suicide.

One must also consider the logistics of getting 35mm film developed. Most large units can do this, but it would be best to coordinate with the S-2 beforehand to get film developed in the field. I would then recommend that Sergeant Foley include this capability on the next FTX to see what kind of turnaround he might get. If it takes too long, it might not be worth the trouble. He might also find out if his tactical lab can develop color film.

If he can get his film developed quickly, I would recommend that he not limit himself to aerial photography. Photographs taken by scouts or from elevated observation positions can also be useful.

Polaroid photos, unfortunately, are not the answer. The quality is pretty poor, which means that details from an aerial photo would be difficult to pick out, and the cameras would not be advisable for ground shots because they make a lot of noise (as do autowind cameras).

A final note: When using a map to determine the scale of a photo, I would recommend against using something as changeable as a body of water, as Sergeant Foley does in the article. Lakes and reservoirs change sizes drastically during the year, and are also affected by such factors as annual rainfall and local water usage. It is better to use the distance be-

tween fixed points such as road intersections to determine scale.

Within the constraints I have mentioned, do-it-yourself photography can be an excellent tool for a field soldier.

WALTER T. NELSON
CPT, Military Intelligence, USAR
Santa Monica, California

MOMENTS IN HISTORY

The reputation of Brigadier General S.L.A. Marshall as a military historian and an analyst has recently come into question.

Roger Spiller, in "S.L.A. Marshall and the Ratio of Fire" (*Royal United Services Institute Journal*, Winter, 1988) questions Marshall's conclusion—from his *Men Against Fire*—that not more than 25 percent of U.S. soldiers fired their weapons during combat in World War II. And Fredric Smoler questions Marshall's methodology in "The Secret of the Soldiers Who Didn't Shoot" (*American Heritage*, March 1989) and raises serious questions on Marshall's credibility in other areas.

Marshall always based his credibility as a military commentator on his experience as a combat leader in World War I (see *The Armed Forces Officer* and numerous other works). In his autobiography, *Bringing Up the Rear*, Marshall states that he ended the war as an infantry lieutenant in a foxhole on the front lines. Smoler says that, according to surviving official documents, Marshall had been assigned to the 315th Engineers, 90th Infantry Division, but that on 11 November 1918 he was attending an NCO school behind the lines.

The actual facts of what went on that day have long been available in World War I division histories. These histories, published immediately after the war, contain a wealth of historical information, as

well as extended rosters of officers. They do not support Marshall's claim.

Marshall says that he toasted the end of the war with Colonel Reeves, a brigade commander from the 89th Division, near Stenay at 1111 hours on 11 November. Stenay was the last town captured by the AEF, but the 353d Infantry, which Colonel Reeves was then commanding, had moved out at 1000 hours to take Stenay. The Germans officially protested this action, which they claim continued until after the 1100 armistice hour. Since his regiment was advancing at the time, it seems highly unlikely that Colonel Reeves was drinking a toast with anyone in a foxhole.

Stenay was actually on the division boundary between the 89th and 90th Divisions. There was a great rivalry between the divisions, and both division histories imply that the 89th took Stenay to secure billet and bath facilities to be used after the armistice.

The 89th Division history contains a roster of all the officers who served with the division overseas, and Marshall's name does not appear on it. The 90th Division history contains a list of all officers who were serving in the division as of 11 November 1918, and Marshall's name does not appear there either.

Marshall used his Armistice Day story to sustain his claims to leadership ability and tactical expertise. Even a quick review of material easily available at the Infantry School library shows that Marshall fabricated his claim of being a combat officer during that war.

Obviously, then, there is a real need for continued analysis of Marshall's works. How well they will stand close scrutiny and the test of time remains to be seen.

CAPTAIN DAVE TAGGART
Fort Benning, Georgia

MUSEUM IN LUXEMBOURG

A new museum is being founded in the southern part of Luxembourg at Differdange to depict the World War II liberation of Luxembourg and the Battle of the Bulge. The museum is intended to highlight the sacrifices and valor of units and

individuals to the greatest possible extent.

The native Luxembourger who owns the property has received the approval of the Ministry of Defense to open the museum. The site includes a number of buildings and a large collection of U.S. Army vehicles of World War II vintage, including an M4 Sherman tank, weapons, communications equipment, and support material.

Additional support is needed from the United States and other sources in the form of World War II films, historical documents, photographs, and anything else that participating units might provide for display.

Recognition and credit, both in writing and in an appropriate manner in the museum when it opens, will be given to all who lend support.

Anyone who wants additional information may write to me at 5012 Mosby Road, Virginia Beach, VA 23455.

THEODORE R. LOWMAN
U.S. Army, Retired

CONTRACT TRAINING

I am troubled by the extent to which civilian institutions are being used to train our soldiers. With all that commanders have to do—the reports, counseling, military justice, ITEP, AMTEP, METLs, and battle focuses—there is little wonder they actively seek expert help with training their soldiers. If the source of assistance happens to come from outside the company, that's great. And if soldiers can gain valuable college credit for their efforts, then better still.

Private educational institutions are eagerly cashing in on lucrative command-sponsored education contracts; our soldiers are earning college credit and promotion points. And I take no issue with these systems so long as they are part of the Army's Continuing Education System.

But when it comes to mission-related and warfighting tasks, officers and non-commissioned officers have an inherent responsibility to train their men themselves. They draw their pay as trainers and mentors to their subordinates. When they contract with a university to train

their soldiers in military map reading or in skill qualification test preparation, they abrogate this responsibility. They are saying that they lack the will and resolve to tackle the training issue. And when they agree to dedicate their P2 mission training dollars to this kind of training, they are asking the taxpayers to pay for it twice—once in leader cost and again in educational costs to contractors.

We need not throw the baby out with the bath water. It is to our benefit to offer and to subsidize civilian education for our deserving soldiers. Some examples of valid educational expenditures are courses in such fields as the sciences, mathematics, biology, history, or other electives that will lead to college degrees. And when the necessary knowledge does not exist in the unit, civilian educators are invaluable in providing "train the trainer" instruction during the fielding of some of our high-technology systems.

But please note that I said "train the trainer," not all the soldiers. Our soldiers look to us, their leaders, for expertness and guidance. Unit cohesion, bonding, and respect come from well planned and well delivered training. When the bullets start flying, I do not expect to see a college professor with our soldiers helping them maintain their weapons or calling for fire—and neither do the soldiers. The cost to unit combat effectiveness of not actively training our soldiers ourselves is too high to contemplate.

JOHN F. IRELAN
CPT, U.S. Army

KENTUCKY BONUSES

The Commonwealth of Kentucky recently enacted a law providing for the payment of bonuses to Kentucky veterans of the Vietnam War.

Veterans who are entitled to receive a bonus include those from Kentucky who served in Vietnam between 1 July 1958 and 15 May 1975. They can receive \$200 for each month of service, up to \$500. Those who were in active service with the armed forces at least 90 consecutive days, other than for training, but not in Vietnam, between 5 August 1964 and 1

May 1975 are eligible for \$15 per month up to \$300.

Application forms are available at county clerks' offices, Department of Employment Services field offices, and each National Guard armory in Kentucky. Applications must be postmarked by midnight, 28 February 1990.

For further details on eligibility and application procedures, interested persons may call (502) 564-8468 between 0830 and 1630 (EST), Monday through Friday, or write to the Department of Military Affairs, Division of Veterans Affairs, EOC Building, Boone National Guard Center, Frankfort, KY 40601-6168.

LARRY L. ARNETT, Director
Division of Veterans Affairs

WORLD WAR II ENCYCLOPEDIA

The publishers of a compact encyclopedia on World War II in Europe are seeking contributors of articles of 100 to 4,000 words in length.

Garland Publishing, Inc., of New York City, is soliciting writers who can cover

subjects such as the leaders, organizations, equipment, tactics, and battles of the war.

Anyone who is interested in contributing should contact me at Am Alten Turnplatz 9, D6652 Bexbach, West Germany.

DAVID T. ZABECKI
MAJ, Field Artillery
USAR

SHAEF VETERANS ASSOCIATION REUNION

The SHAEF Veterans Association (European Theater, World War II) will hold its Fifth Annual Reunion in Arlington, Virginia, at the Crystal City Marriott, 20-22 October 1989.

Anyone who would like additional information may write to me at 7 Slade Avenue, Apt. 415, Baltimore, MD 21208; or call (301) 486-3633.

HOWARD BOWERS

ETOUSA REUNION

The Second National Reunion of the

European Theater of Operations, Headquarters Command and attached units will hold its Second National Reunion in Arlington, Virginia, at the Crystal City Marriott, 20-22 October 1989.

Anyone who is interested may write to me at P.O. Box 42, Fair Haven, NJ 07704; or call (201) 842-4206, for additional information.

ALLEN PETERSEN

ALAMO SCOUT REUNION

A reunion of the Alamo Scouts of the 6th U.S. Army, World War II, will be held 4-8 October 1989 at the Doubletree Inn, 8250 North Central Expressway, Dallas, Texas. (See "Alamo Scouts: Lessons for LRSUs," by Major Billy E. Wells, Jr., INFANTRY, May-June 1989, pages 26-32.)

Anyone who is interested may contact me at 1700 Commerce Place, Suite 1200, Dallas, Texas 75201; telephone (214) 742-9183.

WILLIAM E. McCOMMONS
Convention Chairman

